

THE LIFE HISTORY OF *YOMA SABINA PARVA* (BUTLER)  
(LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE: NYMPHALINAE)

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**Abstract**

The life history of the Australian lurcher, *Yoma sabina parva* (Butler), is described and a larval foodplant listed.

**Introduction**

The Australian lurcher is distributed through the Northern Territory, the islands of Torres Strait, and Cape York to Cairns and the Atherton Tableland (Common and Waterhouse, 1981).

In an effort to discover its life history a female *Yoma sabina parva* was enclosed with various small herbaceous plants occurring in swampy areas. I had previously observed lurchers to frequent these situations apparently attracted to various succulent plants. The caged female subsequently oviposited and adults were raised on one of these plants.

**Life history**

*Foodplant.* *Ruellia* sp., Acanthaceae.

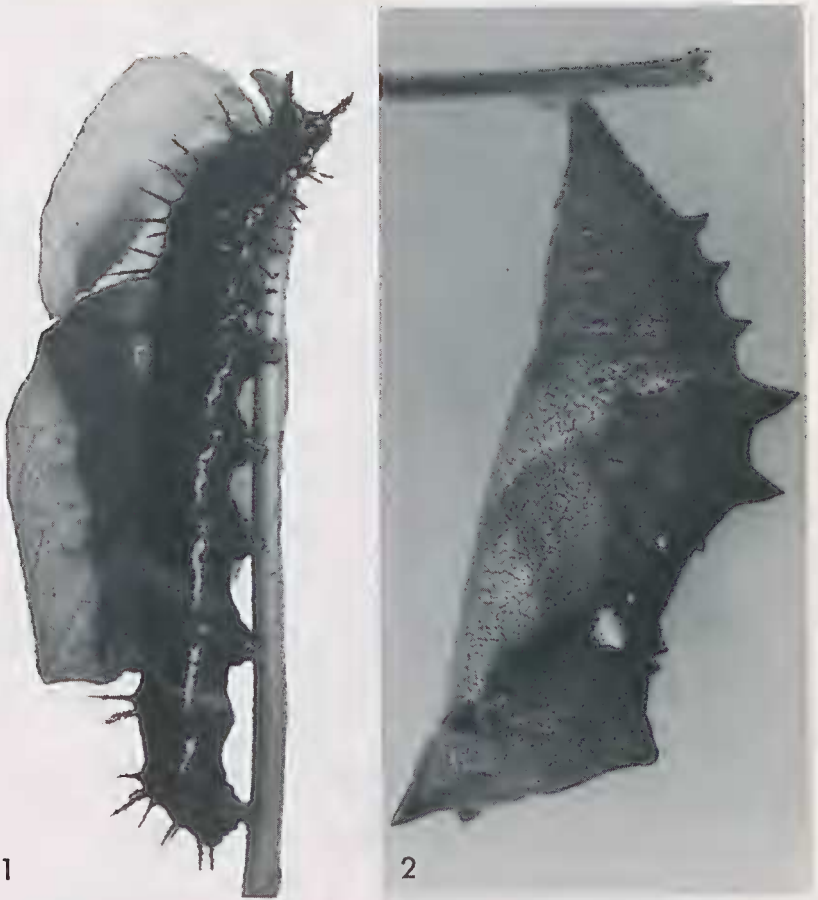
*Egg.* Diameter 1 mm. Shiny silver-green, smooth, spherical, with fine vertical ribs.

*First instar.* Length 2.5 mm. Head smooth, shiny black, rounded square in shape. Body green, turning yellow toward the posterior end, covered with long, forward curved, black hairs.

*Third instar.* Length 6 mm. Head the same as in first instar but with two spined, dorso-lateral horns. Body smooth, lustrous, black, except for prothorax, base and toward posterior end of body, which are orange. Each segment with four large branched spines, dorso-lateral and lateral.

*Fifth instar* (Fig. 1). Length 35 mm. Head as in third instar but with 1 mm long black hairs and spines on horns produced to filaments to 4 mm long. Body smooth, dull black, lateral spines with orange patches at their base, joined by a cream line. Prolegs brown. Body with pale white hairs 0.5 mm long.

*Pupa* (Fig. 2). Length 22 mm. Smooth, with a pair of lateral anterior projections, mesothoracic ridge pointed and with small dorsal projections on abdominal segments three to seven. Dorso-lateral projections on all segments, those on third and fourth abdominals largest. Mesothorax with two pair of large lateral projections, abdominal segments three and four with small lateral projections. Variable grey-brown, with projections on metathorax and abdominal segments one and two white, spiracles black. Suspended by cremaster.



Figs 1, 2. *Yoma sabina parva*: (1) fifth instar larva on foodplant; (2) pupa.

*Notes.* Eggs are laid singly underneath the leaves of the foodplant. Larva shelter beneath the leaves and feed day or night. The foodplant is small and the larva quickly strip it then move about in search of other plants. Pupation occurs on nearby vegetation.

The life cycle, commencing mid December, took thirty two days. Ova hatched in four days, the larval stage took twenty two days, and the pupal duration lasted eight days.

#### Reference

Common, I. F. B. and Waterhouse, D. F., 1981. *Butterflies of Australia*. Second edition. Angus and Robertson, Sydney. 682 pp.